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Living our best lives now and in the future!

Applying His Knowledge of Aging

For the past five years, James Hill has held the position of a field examiner for the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. As part of his work,



he believes he may have interviewed thousands of individuals, many of whom have been older adults. Though not even fifty himself, James has some valuable insights based on his experience and an academic background in gerontology.

From a gerontological perspective, James understands that a “common challenge many older adults share” is being treated as though they are invisible. “I believe people do not understand that aging is not a disease...I think the term ‘old age,’

for many, means anyone more than twenty years older than them.”

James sees older age as a “frame of mind.” He has met individuals “in their thirties who could not function at a level comparable to many eighty and ninety-year-old clients” whom he has interviewed or observed. With healthier lifestyles and medical advancements, James has worked with clients in their nineties who are capable of handling their own affairs. He calls them “youngsters.”

“When it comes to aging, we need to remember that unless there is a medical reason or request, we should strive to allow older adults to age in place (live in one’s own home).” Evidence from research indicates that “the person, the family, and the community will benefit from it.”

Responsibilities as a V.A. Field Examiner

Technically, James works with older individuals who have been deemed incompetent. He appoints payees to manage funds that his clients can no longer handle. He also investigates potential fraud situations and follows up to ensure that his veteran beneficiaries are being taken care of and are treated in a manner “that is consistent with Veteran Affairs policies.”

He says that when he discovers that family, friends, or strangers try to take advantage of his clients

through fraudulent means, he alerts Adult Protective Services, local authorities, and will work with U.S. Assistant Attorneys as they work to prosecute fraud against veterans (as these could be considered federal crimes).

James discovered that adult children often ignore their older parents. He believes that a big challenge some older adults face is “the lack of value younger adults put on older adults; many older adults will tell you they are not horses that need to be put out to pasture.”

In 2013, China passed a law, James said, that made it mandatory for adult children to visit their aging parents or potentially face time in jail and fines. “The law stated children should tend to the older parents’ spiritual needs and [they must] never snub older people.”

“One could say you cannot legislate treatment. However, the same systems that allowed the institutional discrimination of older adults require laws to dismantle them. Discrimination in any form is usually built into the system, favoring one group over another.”

In spite of long hours and demanding work, James enjoys meeting older veterans who tell him their stories from WWII, and the Korean and Vietnam wars. He listens as these veterans also talk about the spouses who had cared for them. He says the insight he has “gained from older adults is to live your life to the fullest, love everyone, and treat people how you want to be treated so that your golden years are not met with regret.”



Serving His Country

James served in the U.S. Navy during the Gulf War. His inspiration for service came from a father and a

brother who both served in the U.S. Army; from them, he heard stories about ‘love of country and service.’

His time in the service taught James that “there is something bigger than the individual. I believe all good Americans possess a ‘love of country’ that allows them to sacrifice the individual for the many.” He said he took this mentality with him when his time in the military ended.



Preparing for Service as a Civilian

After his time in the service, James began his academic studies to become a social worker. While studying at the University of Southern California, he was required to interview older adults as part of his program. He said he had “numerous classes requiring me to interview older adults regarding taboo subjects such as love, sex, and loss.” After numerous awkward interviews, James decided to switch his major to gerontology; he wanted to “learn more about an often-overlooked group of people.” As the University of California has a recognized gerontology program, James had numerous opportunities to learn and speak to groups of older people.

Downtime for a Busy Field Examiner

When his time allows, James does enjoy a good meal. He regularly posts mouth-watering food on his Facebook page. As it turns out, James cooks those dishes himself when he has time. He says that many of his recipes have come from his older clients and that younger cooks cannot hold a candle to some of his “so-called’ older cooks.



It's Never Too Late to Become an Entrepreneur!

For those of you who have always dreamed of owning your own business, there are programs that can help you jump-start making your dream a reality. The Small Business Development Center network offers classes and programs for aspiring entrepreneurs. One of those opportunities will be available in Roseburg this January!

ENCORE/SOLO ENTREPRENEUR BUSINESS BUILDER MAKE A LIVING DOING WHAT YOU LOVE



The ideal program for individuals looking to replace missing income, supplement existing income, and/or fulfill a lifelong dream of becoming an entrepreneur.

- **Find clarity, focus on your mission.**
We'll help you clearly define your mission, services and products, and your target market. With this focus, you'll be able to navigate through opportunities and challenges, ultimately increasing your sales.
- **Find community.**
Share ideas and solve problems with your peers.
- **Define and refine your business model.**
Bring your idea, we'll help you build a business around it. Learn how to build a network so you can focus on doing what you love and work smarter, not harder.

\$299 per business (up to 2 people). Meet for 10 weeks.

SBDC Training Rm 140 2/6-4/9 2-5 PM

Woman to Woman Workshop: *Learn What Your Mother Didn't Know About Life After 50 in the 21st Century*



Join Cindy Eastman and Paula Usrey for a free workshop on how to prepare for your best years after 50.

Date: Tuesday, January 21, from 5 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Location: Roseburg Library (S. Umpqua Room)

RSVP by January 17, 2020. Phone or email:
Cindy – 541-632-4488 or Paula – 541-391-3416
Email: cindyeastman@ffig.com or
paula@boomerbestu.com

If you have questions or would like to suggest future locations, we'd also love to hear from you.

For more information, see our [flyer](#).

No Stopping Us Now: A History of Older Women in America



Gail Collins' latest book offers a fascinating look at women's experiences with aging throughout the history of America.

Susan Rochester recommended this book to me. Now I'm recommending it to any of you who are interested in history, aging, or stories that will inspire you. Read about dozens of amazing women from Martha Washington to Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

For more information and registration visit: [Click Here](#)

